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ABSTRACT

March 1971 data are given for women of Spanish origin in the United States. Country of origin, population, family composition, educational attainment, labor force participation, type of work, income, and low income level are covered. Where separate data for women are not available, data for both sexes are shown. (KM)

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Fact Sheet on Women of Spanish Origin in the United States*

[1971]

Nearly 9 million persons, or about 4.4 percent of the population of the United States, were of Spanish origin in March 1971. Their country of origin was as follows:

Mexican	56 percent
Puerto Rican	16 percent
Cuban	7 percent
Central or South American	6 percent
Other	15 percent

More than half of the total minority group were women. The proportion who were women ranged from 49 percent among those of Mexican origin to 55 percent among Puerto Ricans.

The median age of the Spanish origin population in 1971 was 20.3 years. About half the population were 18 to 64 years of age, 46 percent were under 18 years, and about 4 percent were 65 years and over.

Family composition

About 17 percent of all families of Spanish origin and 12 percent of the families of Mexican origin were headed by a woman in March 1971.

Seven out of 10 families of Spanish origin had children under 18 years of age living in the home.

About 1 out of 5 of all families of Spanish origin had four or more children under 18 years. The ratios for families of Mexican origin and those of Puerto Rican origin were 1 out of 4 and 1 out of 6, respectively.

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*Where separate data for women are not available, data for both sexes are shown. Sources for this fact sheet are Nos. 213, 221, 224, and 226, Series P-20, Current Population Reports, published by Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce.

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Educational attainment

Among every 100 persons of Spanish origin who were 25 years of age and over in March 1971, about 20 had not completed 5 years of school and only 33 had completed 12 or more years of school. However, among those 25 to 29 years old, almost half were at least high school graduates.

Educational Attainment of Persons of Spanish Origin, by Country of Origin, March 1971 (Percent distribution)

Age and years of school completed	Total 1/	Mexican	Puerto Rican
Persons 25 years of age and over			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 5 years of school	19.5	25.7	23.7
5 to 11 years of school	47.9	48.0	56.5
12 years of school or more	32.6	26.3	19.8
Persons 25 to 29 years of age			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 5 years of school	5.8	6.6	9.3
5 to 11 years of school	45.8	44.9	58.2
12 years of school or more	48.4	48.5	32.5

1/ Includes persons of other Spanish origin not shown separately.

Labor force participation

About 39 percent of all Spanish origin women of the usual working age (16 to 64 years) were working or seeking work in March 1971. Women of Mexican origin were more likely to be working than were women of Puerto Rican origin--their respective labor force participation rates were 36 and 29 percent.

Type of work

About 41 percent of all Spanish origin women employed in November 1969 held white-collar jobs (professional, managerial, clerical, and sales); 35 percent were blue-collar workers (operatives, craftsmen, and nonfarm laborers); and 24 percent were service workers. There was considerable variation according to country of origin: more than half of the women of Puerto Rican origin were blue-collar workers; almost half of those of Cuban origin were white-collar workers; and those of Mexican origin were more evenly distributed among white-collar, blue-collar, and service work.

Type of Work of Employed Women of Spanish Origin, by Country of Origin, November 1969

Type of work	Total 1/	Mexican	Puerto Rican	Cuban
Total employed	1,060,000	514,000	155,000	108,000
Percent	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
White-collar work	40.9	37.7	38.6	48.1
Blue-collar work	34.8	29.6	53.6	41.3
Service work	23.5	31.5	7.8	10.6
Farm work	.8	1.2	--	--

1/ Includes persons of other Spanish origin not shown separately.

Income

The 1970 median income from all sources for families with a head of Spanish origin was $7,334. Within the Spanish origin population, the median income of all Puerto Rican families ($5,975) was considerably below that of all Mexican-American ($7,117).

For all families with a head of Spanish origin who worked year round full time, the median income was $9,309. There was very little difference in median incomes of Mexican-American families and Puerto Rican families whose head was fully employed ($8,946 and $8,829, respectively). For Cuban families with a fully employed head, however, the median was $9,546.

Low-income level*

About 24 percent of all persons of Spanish origin, 28 percent of those of Mexican origin, and 29 percent of those of Puerto Rican origin had incomes below the low-income level in 1970.

The likelihood of being poor was very high for families headed by a woman and for women classified as unrelated individuals. Half of all persons of Spanish origin so situated were poor. The proportions ranged from 48 percent for those of Puerto Rican origin to 62 percent for those of Mexican origin.

*The low-income concept used in this report, formerly called the poverty level, classifies families and unrelated individuals as being above or below the low-income level, using cutoffs adjusted to take account of such factors as family size, sex and age of family head, number of children, and farm-nonfarm residence. In 1970, the low-income thresholds ranged from about $1,950 for an unrelated individual to $6,470 for a family of seven or more persons. The threshold for a nonfarm family of four was $3,968.